

# STATE OF IOWA AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/DIVERSITY PLAN AND REPORT

## **Diversity Plan's Relationship to Affirmative Action**

Each department will submit by July 31<sup>st</sup> an Affirmative Action/Diversity Plan to DAS, who will receive it on behalf of the Diversity Council. This document is to report on your activities and accomplishments for FY 2008, and report on your intended activities for FY 2009.

For the purposes of this document, the term protected classes refers specifically to females, minorities, and persons with disabilities. Protected classes may be subject to numerical goal setting in employment. The term diversity includes the protected classes, but also includes broader differences, such as age, sexual orientation, and religion. These differences are not subject to numerical goal setting in employment, but may be protected by non-discrimination statutes and policies. Please refer to Executive Order Four and the State's EEO/AA Policy for more details.

## **Diversity Plan Content and Design**

*(The following AA/Diversity Plan and Report format is required; however additional material may be submitted or referenced.)*

### **I. Hiring and Promotion Practices**

You submitted a baseline of your current hiring and promotional practices to DAS in February 2008. DAS will be contacting you to address questions and seek clarification of your submission. You will not need to submit any additional information until these meetings take place over the next several weeks.

**AGENCY ACTION:** If you have made any changes to your hiring practices during FY 2008 since your February submission, please submit these changes as part of your FY 2008 AA/Diversity plan results. In addition, if you plan any changes in FY 2009 those may also be submitted.

## II. Recruitment and Retention Plan

**AGENCY ACTION:** Please fill in the text boxes in the template to describe any activities or initiatives you took in FY 2008 to address recruitment issues in your agency and your plans for FY 2009.

### Recruitment and Retention Plan Intent

Recruitment and Retention of a skilled, productive, and motivated workforce is critical to establishing and maintaining a culture of excellence. Department plans will reflect specific departmental skill and workforce makeup needs to reveal opportunities for attention and improvement. These plans are intended to document your efforts in creating a culture of excellence.

### Recruitment Plan

The purpose of the department's recruitment plan will be to position state government at all levels for success in finding, acquiring, retaining and promoting quality talent.

The primary components of the recruitment portion of the template include:

- Organizational Strategies
- Analysis of Factors Affecting Recruitment
- Sourcing Activities and Tools
- Other Recruitment Management Methods
- Milestones and Time Tables

### Organizational Strategy

*Improving diversity will help us advance our long term strategic objectives and business goals in the following manner:*

A variety of skill sets, backgrounds, expertise, and viewpoints has and will continue to provide the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) with the breadth and depth of advice relied on by the Board members to make full and fair decisions. As we continue to develop staff to multi-task and provide backup of essential functions, ensuring that the competency, accountability, and the professionalism of the agency is carried on when tenured staff leave, a diverse workforce will be an asset. Also, as we seek to increase Iowans' awareness of Iowa Utilities Board services, informational resources, and responsibilities, an expanded heritage base of staff members will be able to provide insight in how best to reach various target groups.

*The overall organizational strategy for recruitment in my department for FY 2008 and changes for 2009 will include the following:*

FY 2008 No changes from February 2008 Hiring and Promotional Practices submitted to DAS

FY 2009 No changes from February 2008 at this time.

*Describe how managerial staff is assigned or otherwise allocated to the recruitment function. Please list what levels of management are involved in the recruitment function:*

FY 2008 The Board Chairman, Executive Secretary and the supervisor jointly determine if a position needs to be filled. Supervisors are responsible for hiring to fill positions deemed necessary. The Executive Secretary assists hiring supervisors, as they desire. When a managerial or Board support staff position is vacant, the Executive Secretary assists the Board members throughout the hiring and interview process.

FY 2009 No change foreseen from FY 2008.

*The name and contact information of a primary recruitment contact for usage by DAS is:*

Judi K. Cooper, Executive Secretary, Iowa Utilities Board. Phone: 515-281-5386. E-mail: judi.cooper@iub.state.ia.us

### **Analysis of Factors Affecting Recruitment**

*Based on known or projected staffing needs for FY 2009, please provide an estimate of the number of vacancies you plan to fill in FY 2009. (Note: this is for general information only and not intended to replace the affirmative action analysis and goal setting for FY 2009):*

Three or four positions. One is currently vacant, and two or three will likely become vacant due to retirement.

*Of the total number of positions to be filled, the following job classes have been identified as difficult to fill based on previous experience:*

Utilities Regulation Inspector. While we do not anticipate hiring an engineer or a manager, these classifications have also been difficult or challenging in the past: Utilities Regulation Engineer and Utility Administrator

*Of the total number of positions to be filled, the following job classes have been identified as high turnover:*

Utilities Regulation Inspector, due to utility industry offers and retirements.

*Of the difficult to fill and high turnover job classes, list recruitment barriers experienced by job class:*

Utilities Regulation Inspector - approximately 80% travel is expected within the state of Iowa; the salary is not close to industry equivalents per our salary study; we have requested a phase-in to the higher pay grade and await DAS's decision. Utilities

Regulation Engineer - Engineers in private practice can expect higher salaries. Utility Administrator - Most candidates either have the industry experience, but no management experience, or management experience with no relevant utility industry experience. Our own staff does not seem particularly interested in being promoted to the administrator, or manager, level. We suspect this is because most staff would lose the accrual of compensatory time if they accepted a managerial position. They would also lose the ability to carry over unused sick leave from one fiscal year to the next to a cap of 80 hours, as well as the use of three days sick leave for every death in the family in a fiscal year. Also, being a smaller agency, staff have observed the variety of personnel issues management must deal with. The small increment in salary, paired with the un-level playing field for use of sick leave, is not viewed as adequate compensation for the increase in duties. In reality, considering that managers do not earn compensatory time, the hourly wage of managers can trail behind those at the top of the utility analyst series. In addition, the fact that new state employees have zero vacation and sick leave accruals when they commence employment with the state is a disadvantage. While the overall state benefit package is good, when potential employees compare the entire offer package, the lack of vacation - both beginning balances and annual accruals - is a negative in the state's tally. This is especially true for experienced candidates that are considering a management or non-entry level position.

*Of the difficult to fill and high turnover job classes, those which are typically underutilized for protected classes (females, minorities, or persons with disabilities) are:*

Utilities Regulation Inspector.

*List the barriers that have been identified in recruitment of the protected classes:*

A lack of qualified applicants.

*The following methods and activities are planned to deal with recruitment barriers in FY 2009:*

Implement a phased-in pay grade increase for the inspector position once we receive DAS's approval. Work with our national organization, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners - NARUC. NARUC has a committee of Executive Directors that are currently working on recruitment and retention issues among the states' regulatory agencies.

## **Sourcing Activities and Tools**

*In FY 2008 we attended the following career fairs, networking events, and community events:*

We have not attended a career fair, but did work with Robin Jenkins on the DAS staff to get the word out to professional organizations when we were hiring an engineer. We have provided IUB brochures to Joe Ellis on the DAS staff for use at

career fairs staffed by DAS employees. We had IUB volunteers at the "I'll Make Me A World" outreach event.

*In FY 2009, we plan to attend the following career fairs, networking events, and community events:*

The efforts with NARUC will be intensified as the committee of Executive Directors focuses on recruitment and retention. We will continue to provide volunteers to community events, such as "I'll Make Me A World." We will continue to encourage our staff to build their own individual networks that can be tapped and put to work when a vacancy exists.

*Besides the DAS BrassRing applicant tracking system, we use (or plan to use in FY 2009) the following sourcing tools:*

<b>Tool</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>Budget Est.</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>Budget Est.</b>
<b>Internet Job Postings</b>	Text Box	Text Box	X	None established.
<b>Resume Search Products</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Standard News Print</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Specialty Trade Journals</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Radio</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>TV</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Open House</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Search Firms</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box
<b>Temporary Staffing</b>	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box	Text Box

*Other (please list):*

Word of mouth by current staff to their networks and acquaintances, and working directly with area post-secondary institutions.

*Identify which of these sourcing tools; either individually or in combination, are most effective in your experience:*

Specialty Trade Journals, such as the NARUC Bulletin and working with Iowa State, American Institute of Business and DMACC, depending on what position we are filling.

## Other Recruitment Management Methods

*In FY 2008, we recruited passive candidates in the following manner (passive candidates are those not actively seeking employment):*

Not applicable.

*Does your agency use interns? If so, please describe your process for recruiting, such as posting to your website or DAS, hiring as temporary, use of Americorps, etc.:*

Not recently. However, we believe this may be the key to obtaining employees with the skill sets we will need in the future.

*Please indicate whether you utilize temporary employment services to provide potential candidates for permanent hire, and if so the process you follow:*

We have not done so recently. When we used temporary staff, it was for administrative assistance. We have not had a shortage of qualified administrative support applicants.

*Describe how you handle, track, or otherwise process unsolicited resumes. Indicate if/how you share these within your agency or with other agencies:*

If the unsolicited resume reveals a potential candidate for IUB employment, the sender is thanked and notified that the resume will be maintained and provided to hiring managers that need the particular experience or skill set. The IUB has also provided the resume of a qualified but unsuccessful applicant to other state agencies, after obtaining authorization from the candidate to do so. The IUB believes it is in the best interest of the state to have high quality, skilled employees in all agencies.

## Milestones and Timetables

*Summarize your FY 2008 recruitment milestones and identify opportunities for improvement:*

At the end of FY 2008, there was one vacant position. We now have a start date set for the candidate.

*For FY 2009, provide a timetable for those activities you plan to implement:*

With some advanced notice of a retirement, we hope to post and fill a position to allow for coaching and mentoring to occur during a position lap-over period.

## Retention Plan

The purpose of the department's retention plan is to retain and promote diverse and qualified talent.

The primary components of the retention portion of the template include:

- Analysis of Factors Affecting Retention in three areas – FY 2008
  - Turnover
  - Promotions
  - Employee Engagement
- Plans to Improve – FY 2009
- Self assessment

### Analysis of Factors Affecting Retention – FY 2008

The following sections are intended to obtain your analysis of the following factors affecting your workforce.

#### Turnover

*From a retention perspective, the following job classes present the greatest challenge:*

Utilities Regulation Inspector

*List the issues you have identified that contribute to the turnover in these classes:*

Offers of higher salaries from industry, and the fact that many of our hires have retired early from a career with a utility company, and are now ready to officially retire.

*Check the methods you use to identify turnover factors (check all that apply):*

☒ Exit interviews

*Describe how these are conducted:*

A manager on staff is selected to conduct the interview. We attempt to match the employee with a manager that will put the employee at ease and generate honest and complete responses to the questions. We use the Exit Information Questionnaire provided by DAS.

☐ Workforce surveys (employee engagement, satisfaction)

*Describe how these are conducted:*



Text Box

☐ Management team meetings/exercises

*Describe how these are conducted:*

Text Box

☐ Other methods (please describe):

Text Box

## **Promotions**

*Identify some of the most critical competencies you perceive to be most lacking in your organization. This may include any particular knowledge, ability, or skill, or personal trait:*

Ability to design utility rates; ability to do technical writing; ability to do scenario and advanced level analytical reviews; while not currently lacking, the ability to do a Class Cost of Service Study is a critical skill; engineering knowledge of utility systems, including transmission, distribution, and nuclear.

*Which of these same competencies are most likely to affect a decision in your organization to open a vacancy to the general public rather than as a promotional opportunity:*

All of the above.

*Identify barriers to promotional opportunities for internal employees, such as lack of education, infrequency of suitable vacancies, geographic location, etc. :*

Lack of vacancies in the Utility Analyst Series, and no tier of classifications for inspectors. As there is only one inspector category, there is no place to grow into.

*Indicate if and how these barriers differ for protected class employees (females, minorities, persons with disabilities):*

No difference.

## Employee Engagement

*Describe any activities or methods (such as surveys or interviews) your department uses to measure the engagement of your employees with your organization:*

We have used an All Staff survey.

*Identify what topics you address:*

- ☒ *Understanding of the organization's vision and mission*
- ☒ *Managerial approachability and style*
- ☒ *Job satisfaction*
- ☐ *Cultural inclusion*
- ☒ *Flow of and access to information*
- ☒ *Career progression awareness*
- ☒ *Work/life balance*
- ☒ *Other – Suitability of office equipment, office set-up*

*Employees would rate the department's effectiveness in communicating the support, programs and promotional opportunities available to them as:*

☐ *Good* ☒ *Needing Improvement* ☐ *Unknown*

*Describe the employee communication methods used to make employees aware of the support, programs, and promotional opportunities available to them:*

Employee bulletin boards, section staff meetings, word of mouth through coaching and mentoring.

*Describe any changes you plan to make around employee engagement in FY 2009:*

May do another survey.

## Plans to Improve – FY 2009

*Check all programs you will implement in FY 2009 and describe how you see the program improving retention in your workforce for FY2009:*

☐ *Orientation and On-boarding:*

Text Box

☒ *Training and educational opportunities to support business needs and employee competencies to enhance promotional potential:*

New technical staff have long had the opportunity to attend utility regulatory training at the Institute of Public Utilities at Michigan State University. More recently New

Mexico State University has a regulatory curriculum. These opportunities will remain in 2009. Providing new staff with training tailored to the regulatory regime helps them to see the importance of the work the Iowa Utilities Board does. When staff have a hands-on opportunity to impact the rendering of a vital service to Iowans, we have experienced loyalty to the agency.

☐ *Workplace accessibility (visual, physical):*

Text Box

☐ *Mentoring:*

Text Box

☐ *Awards and Recognition:*

Text Box

### III. Diversity Training

**AGENCY ACTION:** Please provide information about diversity related training provided in FY 2008. This will be used to report FY 2008 training activities for the FY 2008 affirmative action plan year.

None

Provide information about diversity-related training planned for FY 2009 in the text box.

All hiring managers are signed up to take the one-day DAS approved class. We will begin to work through lessons provided in that training.

**Note:** Mandatory diversity training will be provided to both management and employees in FY 2009. However, include in your plan and report any other training you are planning or have done.

## IV. Workforce Composition and Hiring Opportunities

**AGENCY ACTION:** The goal setting data to address underutilization of protected class members in underutilized job categories will be sent to you for action separately in late July as mentioned earlier in this document. This data won't be available until after the end of the fiscal year. Therefore you will not need to submit your hiring goals with this document.

We will continue to address numerical underutilization through the normal quantitative affirmative action process as you have done in the past:

- DAS will provide your agency with your department's workforce composition, average turnover, and underutilization by job class.
- Your agency will review this data and establish hiring goals for FY 2009.
- Hiring lists issued by DAS will continue to identify protected class members if the job class is underutilized. How this list is handled should be addressed in your hiring practices and procedures (Item I., above).
- DAS will calculate your year end FY 2008 protected class hiring progress.
- Your hiring progress in FY 2008 and hiring goals for FY 2009 will be incorporated into the AA/Diversity Plan Annual Report to the IGOV and Legislature, due by September 30, 2008.

You also receive periodic hiring opportunity reports that remind you of the vacancies that are currently in process for your department

As a general measure of diversity in state government, a current workforce composition report (April 17, 2008) comparing your department to the executive branch overall is provided. Please use this as needed.

## V. Efforts of the Agency to Encourage and Celebrate Diversity

**AGENCY ACTION:** Please fill in the following text boxes for each question. This will constitute your plan for FY 2009 to encourage and celebrate diversity. Also report any FY 2008 activities.

*Describe how the success of your diversity efforts advances your department's long-term strategic objectives and business goals.*

The Iowa Utilities Board staff is relatively balanced in gender; 10% of our staff is minority. Several on our staff have disabilities, although we can not be aware of all disabilities due to the option to self-designate. As a small agency, we far exceed the state average for minority percentage. Our diverse composition of backgrounds, experiences, ethnicities, and knowledge serves the Board members, Iowa utility companies, and Iowans well.

*Describe how your managers and supervisors will be involved in diversity.*

In addition to increasing awareness at the DAS sponsored training, managers may work with their individual teams on the monthly lessons provided by the training. This will be more solidified as we have an opportunity to review the material and determine how best to use it.

*Executive Order 4 establishes the goal to be inclusive of employees with differences in age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, and disability. Describe the methods and activities you plan to initiate in FY 2009 to broaden inclusiveness for all these groups.*

The IUB has had a Fun Team for several years running that plans a variety of group activities for all IUB staff to participate in and enjoy. Examples of activities include fund raisers where staff can work together toward a common cause of helping others, and luncheons where all can gather to enjoy a meal and conversation.